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ABSTRACT

As society becomes more accepting of unfamiliar cultures, Marxism must be reexamined for its relationship to current management styles and its potential worth in training and the work environment. The educational method of Marxism emphasizes discussion over lecture. Marxism proposes that general education is the key to having a classless society. It recognizes the need to educate workers, but Marxist leaders fear an attraction to more knowledge and democracy if such a breakthrough would occur. Two facets of Marxism seem contradictory. First, Marxism recognizes the working class but limits their productivity by providing general knowledge and a limited expansion of hands-on skill opportunities. Second, Marxism promotes the ideals of change but blocks out the notion of a propagandist who can offer meaning or relevant knowledge to the masses. If compared to U.S. businesses, this scenario seems very familiar. Organizations need workers and their productivity but are ill prepared or fearful to provide the necessary knowledge through training. Moreover, management has consistently stifled the creativity, productivity, and ambition of workers. Organization leaders are doing nothing more than supporting the Marxist philosophy. Employees are asked to support the company without formative questions. For these reasons, Marxism will not be a wave of the future for U.S. businesses. Two positive notes from the Marxist era are recognition of change and discussion as an educational technique. Contains two references.) (YLB)

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Marxism: The Relationship to Today's Work and Training

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Marxism: The Relationship to Today's Work and Training

Historically, those comfortable in a democratic society have criticized communism and anything remotely associated with such a dictatorship. The Marxism philosophy has been one of those taboos. However, as society becomes more liberal and accepting of unknown cultures, Marxism must be re-examined for its relationship to present day management styles and its potential worth in training and the work environment. This paper presents the Marxism philosophy and its implications for preparing a workforce.

Marxism

Marxism is rooted with communism in that its founders Karl Marx and V. Lenin were communists. Communism is defined as the "real" movement which disrupts the present state. Similarly, Marxism recognizes the proletariat (lower class individuals) as the revolutionary class of society. Working people are the interest of society and society is their development (Semykin, 1981, p.21). During the Marxism peak, the emphasis on workers was a paradigm shift which communism itself promoted. The founders of Marxism also believed that education for work could not be separated from a political movement. Marxism was to supply the proletariat with broad based knowledge of laws and their consequences on revolutionary transition. In other words, the attempt of a Marxist would be to provide a general understanding of cultures and what should be done to change them (Morgan, 1989, p. 45).

Inherent in these strong opinions of change is the Marxist bias toward communism. Communism and Marxism sought a myopic view of culture. To the Marxist, there is no non-partisan philosophy. An individual is in one class or the other and not in between (Morgan, 1989, p. 46)

Only general information is provided to lower class individuals in a Marxist society. The details are the responsibility of a collaborative society. The collaborative society would consist of propagandist who searches for truth explanations. A Marxist would advocate the agetationists who provides one vague answer to the masses. Theories are cultivated through demands, struggle, and an exchange of ideas among all. The educational method of the Marxist supports this foundation. A common enlightened process is utilized. An emphasis of discussion in an educational setting takes precedent over lecture arrangements. Ironically, Marxism uses this type of instruction technique as a means of making education democratic. Lenin (as cited by Morgan, 1989) expanded this notion by saying that the Communist Party could learn from workers and workers could gain respect for themselves through this process.

Marxism proposes that general education is the key to having a classless society. General education to a Marxist finds essentials in music, art, natural science, and literature. These subjects are equated with aesthetically pleasing activities. Aesthetics flow truly through the paradox of a classless society (Morgan, 1989, p. 47). Marxism recognizes the need to educate workers but Marxist leaders fear an attraction to more knowledge and democracy if such a

breakthrough occurred. Labor is the principal of human life and the means to existence and development. Also, Marxists agree that the abilities of each individual, although obtained in childhood, must be used to benefit society. Some of these are diligence, resourcefulness, persistence, and interest (Semykin, 1981, p. 24). Working masses need education but such a method would redefine the Communist Party works (Morgan, 1989, p. 47).

Relationship to Today's Work and Training

Two facets of Marxism stand out with contradiction to outsiders and most probably to insiders. First, Marxism recognizes the working class but limits their productivity by providing general knowledge, and a limited expansion of hands on skill opportunities. Secondly, Marxism promotes the ideals of change but blocks out the notions of a propagandist who can offer meaning or relevant knowledge to the masses. It is as if the question is not to reason why but just to accept communism as the stand for change.

The above scenario, if compared to American businesses, would seem very familiar. Organizations need workers and their productivity but are ill prepared or fearful to provide the necessary knowledge through training. Moreover, management has consistently stifled the creativity, productivity, and ambition of their workers. Companies still remain, although few, who do not inform their employees of company goals, objectives, or missions. Organization leaders are doing nothing more than supporting the Marxist philosophy. Employees are asked to support the company without formative questions.

It is for these reasons that Marxism will not be a wave of the future for American businesses. Although, companies have spent and are spending years discovering this revelation. It is because of the employee oppression suffered at the hands of Marxists that, today, programs such as empowerment, teamwork, and brainstorming have become successful in work. It is inherent in each individual that they want to learn more as they proceed in life. Thus, American training must become shopping centers for individuals. Training must meet the needs of the individual no matter what the phase in life. Empowerment programs must be expanded. Organizations cannot exist long-term without a growth of the knowledge base.

Two positive notes from the Marxism era are recognition of change and the discussion educational technique. Organizations are being forced to wander into endangered territory in order to maintain their status. However, if organizations take the initiative to do something differently than the present, they can quite possibly exceed the status quo. Unlike, Marxism, change is accepted and must be adapted to in present organizational climates. Training for change must become an attachment to technical training. Technical training must step beyond present norms to introduce state of the art newness to the field.

Additionally, discussion as a means of learning attempts to breakdown, the fears of gaining knowledge and making decisions. Each individual is received as fair and acceptable. The most bazaar ideas sometime bring the

most change and provide the greatest paradigm opportunities. As the Marxists say, this technique does provide democracy in education. This author believes that more freedom in organizations is the key to future economic success here at home and abroad. This discussion technique is one way of doing this. As individuals become more comfortable in their work roles, their efforts become more powerful. Every worker can explore a multitude of ideas and be accountable for their decisions. On the other hand, discussion should not be the center of education. It should be coupled with a purpose such as problem solving. As a result, action must take place in a reasonable amount of time.

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